AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A rubber access mat for forming a roadway or pathway for vehicles and people, comprising:

a flexible rubber slab made from recycled vehicular tires, the slab having a top face and a bottom face defining a thickness of 3 inches, opposed side edges defining a width and opposed end edges defining a length;

a first rigidifying grid of reinforcing steel wire embedded within the rubber slab spaced between the top face and the bottom face and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced steel wires embedded within the rubber slab along a first plane and extending continuously between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced steel wires embedded within the rubber slab and extending continuously between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab; and

a second rigidifying grid of reinforcing steel wire embedded within the rubber slab between the top face and the first rigidifying grid and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced steel wires embedded within the rubber slab along a second plane that is different from the first plane and extending continuously between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced steel wires embedded within the rubber slab and extending continuously between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab;

wherein the diameter of the reinforcing steel wire of the first and second rigidifying grid ~~being~~ is not smaller than number ten gauge wire in order to provide sufficient rigidity while retaining sufficient flexibility to conform to uneven terrain, and

wherein the wires of the first and second rigidifying grids have a relative spacing between approximately 2 to 4 inches.

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2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Original) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the same gauge of wire.

5. (Original) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the different gauges of wire.

6. (Original) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have the same relative spacing.

7. (Original) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have different relative spacing.

8. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number three gauge and a relative spacing of approximately three inches.

9. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.

10. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 1, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.

11. (Currently amended) A rubber access mat for forming a roadway or pathway for vehicles and people, comprising:

a flexible rubber slab having opposed side edges defining a width and opposed end edges defining a length;

a first rigidifying grid of reinforcing wire embedded within the rubber slab and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced wires embedded within the rubber slab along a first plane and extending between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced wires embedded within the rubber slab and extending between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab; and

a second rigidifying grid of reinforcing wire embedded within the rubber slab and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced wires embedded within the rubber slab along a second plane that is different from the first plane and extending between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced wires embedded within the rubber slab and extending between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab;

wherein the diameter of the reinforcing wire ~~being~~ is not smaller than the diameter of number ten gauge wire in order to provide sufficient rigidity while retaining sufficient flexibility to conforms to uneven terrain, and

wherein the wires of the first and second rigidifying grids have a relative spacing between approximately 2 to 4 inches.

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12. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the same gauge of wire.

13. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges are the different gauges of wire.

14. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have the same relative spacing.

15. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have different relative spacing.

16. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number three gauge and a relative spacing of approximately three inches.

17. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number six gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.

18. (Previously presented) The rubber access mat as defined in Claim 11, wherein the wires extending between the opposed side edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches and the wires extending between the opposed end edges have a number ten gauge and a relative spacing of approximately two inches.

19. (Currently amended) A roadway for vehicles and people formed of at least one rubber access mat, wherein the rubber access mat comprises:

a flexible rubber slab having opposed side edges defining a width and opposed end edges defining a length;

a first rigidifying grid of reinforcing wire embedded within the rubber slab along a first plane and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab; and

a second rigidifying grid of reinforcing wire embedded within the rubber slab along a second plane that is different from the first plane and consisting of a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed side edges for most of the width of the rubber slab and a plurality of parallel spaced wires extending between the opposed end edges for most of the length of the rubber slab;

wherein the reinforcing wire ~~being~~ is not less than number ten gauge wire, and

wherein the wires of the first and second rigidifying grids have a relative spacing between approximately 2 to 4 inches.

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